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AFRICAN SECURITY CHALLENGES:

NOW AND OVER THE HORIZON

SUMMARY OF PROJECT FINDINGS

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**THE DEFENSE THREAT REDUCTION AGENCY
Advanced Systems and Concepts Office**

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African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon

SUMMARY OF PROJECT FINDINGS

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November 2010

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The mission of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) is to safeguard America and its allies from weapons of mass destruction (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high explosives) by providing capabilities to reduce, eliminate, and counter the threat, and mitigate its effects.

The Advanced Systems and Concepts Office (ASCO) supports this mission by providing long-term rolling horizon perspectives to help DTRA leadership identify, plan, and persuasively communicate what is needed in the near term to achieve the longer-term goals inherent in the agency's mission. ASCO also emphasizes the identification, integration, and further development of leading strategic thinking and analysis on the most intractable problems related to combating weapons of mass destruction.

For further information on this project, or on ASCO's broader research program, please contact:

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SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

On February 6, 2007, U.S. President George W. Bush directed the establishment of a new Combatant Command focused on Africa. The announcement of U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) kindled a flurry of discussion amongst Africa watchers in Washington, DC and beyond. Debate largely centered on the implications of this announcement, the mission of the new Command, its location, and above all, how USAFRICOM actions would reconcile with those of other players in the region and whether the decision signified a militarization of U.S. policy in the region.

Regardless of this debate, the establishment of the Command reflects several important changes in U.S. Government, particularly U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) perceptions about the importance of Africa to U.S. strategic interests. Previously, three geographic Combatant Commands (COCOMs) shared responsibility for Africa, a situation that sometimes resulted in fragmented action in the region. USAFRICOM's almost continent-wide responsibility allows the DoD to assume a comprehensive approach as it addresses security challenges on the continent, suggests an increasing recognition of the commonalities across African states and regions, and serves as an acknowledgement that many security concerns and obstacles, as well as their root causes and effects, transcend these physical boundaries. The Command's interagency component also suggests a greater recognition of the need for consistent coordination of U.S. activities to address these security challenges. The DoD is but one player in the region and must consistently work with other U.S. Government departments and agencies to support broader activities in the region when appropriate.

With this heightened interest and attention in mind, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency's Advanced Systems and Concepts Office (DTRA/ASCO) initiated a fundamental research assessment of African security challenges – what they are today and what they might be over the horizon. This assessment could be used to inform future planning and research for ASCO, and inform those U.S. Government players active in the region, including, but not limited to the newest form of DoD engagement, USAFRICOM.

Research Objective

It is important to note that the vision for this project at the outset was to study USAFRICOM's mission and structure and determine how these would affect the way that the Command addressed security challenges in the region. When it was determined that many conferences, workshops, and publications had already addressed this topic (coupled with the fact that the USAFRICOM mission and structure were still being refined as it stood up), the research team realized that a broader and more fundamental “challenges-centric” assessment was needed. Indeed, many players were rightly investigating the “nuts and bolts” of USAFRICOM and other U.S. engagement in the region (specifically how that might be affected by the stand-up of the new Command), yet few were conducting a comprehensive assessment of what security challenges those players might need to address today and in the future. The research team felt an “over the horizon” aspect was especially important and an area in which our research could inform future strategic planning.

The research objective was to define the major categories of security challenges in Africa today and explore possibilities for what they might be over the horizon.¹ Using fundamental insights from academic and research experts to develop a better understanding of those challenges, the research was intended to explore how the challenges intersect and identify their importance for U.S., especially USAFRICOM, activities and engagement on the continent at a strategic level. This research would provide a platform for further study of how the United States can address the identified challenges through various (and ideally coordinated) forms of engagement, including USAFRICOM.

It is important to stress that this research project was not focused on developing an assessment of every security challenge that is or could potentially affect African stability. Of those challenges it did consider, the goal was not to obtain an in-depth, field-based perspective on how they are or might be manifesting in specific African countries or sub-regions and identifying specific near-term policy responses to deal with them. Put succinctly, it was not an effort to gather or analyze intelligence, nor was it focused on recommending changes to current U.S. policy or related activities in the region.

It was focused, however, on identifying broad trends affecting African security and stability today, and possibly over the horizon in an effort to improve situational awareness at a strategic level. It emphasized the importance of understanding contextual factors as one engages in the region. It also sought to identify those general principles that should frame U.S. and other security-based engagement in the region over the long-term. It would, in effect, provide a baseline for more in-depth, policy-relevant, security challenge-specific research over the long-term.

Research Approach

To accomplish the aforementioned research objective, the research team performed academic literature and expert reviews to identify a large list of African security challenges with the recognition that there is some debate among experts on the challenge areas and their importance relative to one another. The team also surveyed U.S. Government strategic documents (including USAFRICOM mission and vision statements) to obtain a list of those challenges the government identifies as important. Eventually, this list was pared down to three broad categories of challenges and served as a foundation for an academic workshop at which the security challenges were discussed in October 2008.²

1. Transnational security issues
 - a. Small arms/light weapons
 - b. Maritime security
 - c. Disease

¹ The focus would mostly be on Sub-Saharan Africa, by virtue of the team's expertise, though North African contexts would also be explored as much as possible.

² The list was pared down for both practical and budgetary reasons. That is, the research team needed to conduct a one day workshop with academic experts and therefore tried to select challenges that could be discussed within that timeframe, but that would also allow for broad participation among many types of experts. It also selected challenges of particular interest to the sponsoring organization (DTRA/ASCO) and incorporated some challenges that might not be viewed as important today, but that could dramatically affect the security landscape tomorrow.

2. Internal and regional conflict
 - a. Border issues, spread of conflict, and peacekeeping
 - b. Humanitarian assistance, refugees, and internally-displaced persons
 - c. Rebels
 - d. Post-conflict reconstruction issues
3. Potential flashpoints/future security challenges
 - a. Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and R&D developments
 - b. Oil and natural resource competition and exploitation
 - c. Terrorism and radical Islam
 - d. China and other states

While the approach to the challenges selection was not scientific, the research team viewed this research project as a starting point and not an end point for the study. The workshop in October 2008 provided a foundation for more in-depth and specific discussions and research on major security challenges and their implications; it also pointed the research team to several issues involving government and academic debate. Additionally, it highlighted the need to consider various methodologies to discuss security challenges among these two groups to ensure effective discussion. Indeed, it was also widely understood that one study would not be enough to accurately and comprehensively capture the challenges that make up the African security environment.

After the October 2008 workshop, the research team selected six specific security challenges that would receive greater attention via in-depth academic working group discussion sessions and analytic papers.³ Participants at these working group discussions would focus on the current and possible future nature of a specific challenge, for example, small arms and light weapons, and how it might intersect with others. They would also preliminarily consider the implications of this challenge for U.S. engagement on the continent. From February 2009 to February 2010, the team hosted working group discussions on weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons, disease, displacement and militancy, food security and conflict, and departing slightly from previous research topics, challenges, issues, and approaches in improving African security through the use of non/less-than-lethal force.⁴

Throughout these discussions it became clear that the non-governmental organization (NGO) community also had perspectives to bring to these discussions which may or may not mirror the perspectives of their academic counterparts. The research team commissioned five think pieces from members of the NGO community to obtain additional perspective on these issues.⁵ The NGO think pieces focused on: weapons of mass

³ Reports from these academic working group discussion sessions are available as publically releasable documents.

⁴ These topics were selected for several reasons. They were the subject of broad debate at the October 2008 workshop or similar events, of interest to the sponsoring organization and/or the U.S. Africa Command, and/or lacked extensive study within the U.S. Department of Defense.

⁵ Because of the broad and far-reaching nature of the NGO community and the fact that most representatives are actively working in the field, it was decided it would be most effective to obtain NGO insight through commissioning think pieces from a representative NGO sample. For the purposes of this project, an NGO representative was broadly defined as someone who engaged in field

destruction, small arms and light weapons, disease (specifically HIV/AIDS), displacement and militancy, and security sector reform.⁶ Each author was asked to consider the following sets of questions in his/her think piece:

- How is this challenge manifesting itself in Africa today? How is it evolving? Which dimensions of the challenge need to be understood and addressed?
- What are some of the analytical and practical dilemmas facing the non-government community, including local civil society representatives, as it addresses the challenge?
- What principles should shape any plan to address this challenge over the near and long-term in Africa? Are there principles that apply to multiple African contexts and transcend particular situations?
- What issues must be considered when formulating government (including military)/non-government partnerships to address the challenge? Do such partnerships exist in the African context and what do they entail? What are the benefits and drawbacks of such partnerships? What is needed to make them effective (if they should exist at all)?

Next Steps

DTRA/ASCO has identified several next steps for this research, including the development of an edited volume entitled, “African Security Challenges in the 21st Century: Current and Emerging Issues.” This volume, currently in development, considers many of the challenges identified and explored in this project along with several others including terrorism, maritime security, and competition for and exploitation of natural resources. Eight experts, including some who participated in the academic working group discussion sessions, are developing chapters on editor-selected African security challenges. Employing both theme and case study-based research and analytic approaches, they will consider the nature of the challenge, how it manifests in Africa, intersections with other security challenges, the implications of the challenge for human and international security, and the future of the challenge. Additional chapters will be commissioned to identify the policy implications of this research.

and/or publication work for a research and/or advocacy organization not affiliated with a particular government or university.

⁶ An additional piece was slated to be completed on food security and conflict, but that think piece was not completed as planned. The HIV/AIDS focus in the disease paper was a result of the author’s expertise. Additionally, due to the nature of NGO work, the research team thought it was more prudent to commission a paper on security sector reform, an issue heavily discussed in the previously mentioned academic working group discussion session on non/less- than-lethal force issues, rather than non/less-than-lethal force issues in and of themselves.

SECTION 2: OVERALL RESEARCH THEMES

The project team commissioned analyses and convened discussions with academic and/or NGO experts on an array of African security challenges including mass destruction (WMD) threats, small arms and light weapon (SA/LW) threats, disease as a security issue, displacement and militancy, food security and conflict, and security sector reform and non/less-than-lethal force issues. Although each of these analyses and discussions had different emphases, several common themes emerged across all of the papers and discussions.

All participants emphasized the importance of context when studying any African security challenge. While some common trends can be found across the region (e.g., a lack of border security and governance challenges), it is important to consider how each challenge is manifesting at a local, country, and/or sub-regional level. This in-depth contextual knowledge is imperative to develop appropriate security-focused engagement plans to address each challenge. It is also important to remember that security situations are dynamic. As such, solutions to particular security problems that worked in a particular place at a particular time may not be appropriate in that same place at another point in time. Blueprint solutions are not feasible, and every engagement activity will need to be tailored to the particular situation of concern.

Another common theme was that a broad definition of security is needed to appropriately analyze all dimensions of a particular source/effect of instability in Africa. Therefore, both the local, regional, and international impacts of the security problem need to be considered when developing appropriate solutions to the problem. Although many of the challenges this project considered can be considered “traditional” security problems (for example, small arms and light weapon proliferation and use), there are also human security dimensions that need to be factored into any engagement strategy. This is especially true at the local level. There was general agreement that definitions of “security” should be expanded to include human security concepts.

Participants broadly noted that an even more fundamental issue was to determine “whose security is being considered?” when analyzing each challenge and/or developing engagement plans to address it. It is not always true that every African state and the United States, for example, consider the same sets of issues to be “security issues” that need to be addressed to achieve strategic and national interests. There might also be disagreement on the level of importance that should be placed on a particular issue. For example, weapons of mass destruction proliferation is an issue on which the United States places a higher priority than most African states. Finally, it is important to remember that there is no common set of security issues deemed to be important or relevant by all African governments. Each government might also place a different priority on addressing that issue. It is important to know and understand these differences, especially when planning sub-regional or regional engagements that require effective multi-national partnerships.

However, focusing on state-perceptions of security issues is not enough. It is not always true that the citizens of a particular African country view the issues that their government

deems to be important as important to their daily lives and their individual security. If citizen buy-in and participation in programming aimed at improving stability in a particular African state is required, these perceptual differences need to be understood. In some cases, where a government is viewed as illegitimate, weak, or corrupt (an issue that plagues many African countries), this issue becomes even more relevant. In every case, those engaging in an African country should remember the impact of instability on the population and not consider the impact simply in state-based terms. In many cases, programming to improve governance may be necessary before (or in addition to) considering particular security challenges affecting a particular state.

Along those same lines, it is important to remember that there is considerable overlap between security and development concerns in Africa. It may be important to use both security-based and development tools to address the root causes and effects of security problems. However, the blurring of the lines between “what is security?” and “what is development?” can lead to many engagement-related questions and conundrums, especially in situations in which security, development, and sometimes humanitarian professionals must work together to improve security situations in a particular city, country, or sub-region of Africa. Questions can emerge about who should be doing the engaging, what engagement should entail, and how professionals that use different tools (e.g., defense, diplomacy, or development) can best work together to execute programming to improve African stability. There was general agreement that more research is needed in this area, in particular research that examines current practices and lessons-learned from engagement in Africa since the stand-up of the U.S. Africa Command.⁷

A similar question about engagement relates to whether each security challenge should be treated separately or whether analysis and engagement should consider them within the broad context of the African security environment. While there was some suggestion that “challenge-specific” engagement is needed to improve prospects for long-term success, there were also broad suggestions as to how efforts towards the improvement of border security, for example, would likely have a broad positive impact in reducing the potential for weapons of mass destruction and small arms and light weapon proliferation threats to emerge and possibly worsen. Likewise, security sector reform-based activities can have a broad impact in a variety of areas. A good solution might be to use both broad-based and challenge-specific engagement strategies in concert with one another.

⁷ To this end, DTRA/ASCO is working with the Naval Postgraduate School to convene a workshop that addresses these questions in December 2010.

SECTION 3: INSIGHTS ON SPECIFIC AFRICAN SECURITY CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT

As previously noted, this research project focused on six African security challenges which were explored through workshops, working group discussion sessions, and analytic papers. They included weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats, small arms and light weapon (SA/LW) threats, disease as a security issue, displacement and militancy, food security and conflict, and security sector reform/non/less-than-lethal force issues. This summary presents an overview of the insights that emerged about the nature of these challenges, how they might intersect with others, and implications for engagement.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Threats

Findings

Although it is not appropriate to identify one “African” perception of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats and their relevance/importance, it could be said that there is more of a tendency on the part of the United States to regard these “traditional” WMD threats as encompassing an important security challenge than there is for most African governments. With the possible exception of the United States’ bilateral engagement with South Africa, WMD issues do not rise to the forefront of U.S.-African engagement.⁸ Although WMD threats in Africa are currently latent, they certainly should not be ignored.

Although it is unlikely that Africa will serve as a major location for the production of WMD, a limited proliferation threat does, and will likely continue to, exist. This threat should be monitored over the long-term. Nonetheless, today, small arms and light weapons might be considered the “real WMD” of Africa.⁹

Though motivation and capacity issues preclude most, if not all, of Africa from becoming a major site for state or non-state actors to *produce* WMD for the foreseeable future, several contextual factors indicate that it is prudent to consider the conditions which may allow WMD proliferation activities to emerge and exist in some regions of Africa. Any Africa-focused analysis of WMD proliferation threat potential needs to be grounded in a broader assessment of those trends that impact African stability. A few of those related trends were explored in this project.

⁸ The WMD experts that participated in this project generally agreed that South Africa’s experience may be a useful case study to examine on its own, but some of the lessons learned in that context may not apply to most of the rest of Africa. Context does matter.

⁹ Here, it is important to note that we are emphasizing the mass impact/destruction-potential of SA/LW. We understand that the term “weapons of mass destruction” traditionally refers to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons. We are not suggesting that the term should also encompass SA/LW. We are simply suggesting that, in Africa specifically, the scale and past and current impact of SA/LW threats far exceeds the threats currently posed by traditional “WMD” in the region.

Naturally Present Agents

Both biological and uranium agents are naturally present on the continent. It has been suggested that unsecured natural biological agents on the continent may not only present health and disease-related concerns for the African people but might also be knowingly exploited and trafficked by those with the proper motivation to do so. Such actions could contribute to an “end game” where they are used in a biological attack on an African country, or perhaps more likely, abroad.

Because biological agents (such as Ebola) are so prominent in many regions of Africa, this presence opens up opportunities for the life sciences research community to study them. While the development of scientific research in the region would be a positive move, the negative implications of such a shift would need to be explored. Indeed, although brain drain and infrastructure issues in most African states currently hinder the development of world-renowned biological research institutions, it is possible that, if overcome, the pursuit of science, including, but not limited to biotechnology research, would facilitate the acquisition of such agents. This would be particularly true if the agents that are being studied in laboratories were not properly secured and/or if researchers in the laboratories are not following standard safety practices. Situations in which disillusioned scientists are present in such laboratories might also need to be analyzed in as much as these scientists could use their expertise to knowingly or unknowingly contribute to nefarious WMD proliferation activities.

Biological agents aren't the only weaponizable agents present in the region. The natural presence of uranium in many parts of Africa (e.g., Niger) continues to be a legitimate proliferation concern. The November 2007 Pelindaba attack in South Africa suggests that particular attention should be placed on securing highly-enriched uranium (HEU) in the region. However, it would be imprudent to consider Pelindaba to be indicative of a high nuclear security threat in South Africa or on the African continent. The presence of HEU only becomes a security issue when facilities are not well secured or when there is an excess stock of it. Eliminating such stockpiles is almost never the right “answer” to addressing potential HEU security threats in Africa. Many African governments may not have the political will to eliminate those stockpiles.

It is important to consider that uranium resources have legitimate uses in Africa. Uranium mining, when proper oversight exists, can be a valuable contributor to economic development in places where it is naturally present. Likewise, some states are exploring civilian nuclear energy programs to meet their energy needs. Eliminating or discouraging such activities is not a recommended approach to ensuring that uranium resources are not proliferated. However, such activities do need to be monitored and safety and security vulnerabilities should be addressed.

Overall, trafficking of biological and/or uranium agents is not an immediate high-level concern in the region. However, it should not be assumed that a threat potential does not exist. Activities, legitimate or otherwise, that involve such agents need to be monitored so that trafficking vulnerabilities do not emerge, or in some cases, increase.

Border Security and Smuggling

Africa's many porous and unmonitored borders and maritime passageways may provide opportunities for motivated individuals to traffic WMD and related materials and technologies throughout the region. Pervasive corruption and/or a lack of education among many border and maritime personnel about dual use technologies and materials may facilitate these individuals' trafficking activities. For example, they might not know the difference between a water pipe and a centrifuge. Bribery is not abnormal activity along many African nations' borders. Many experts suggest that WMD and related materials that are trafficked in Africa are more likely to be ultimately destined for foreign locations. Africa is but a transit point, and its many precarious border situations make it an attractive one. To this end, broader activities to improve border security may prove to be valuable in both addressing WMD threats as well as other threats that are more salient in many African contexts.

Additionally, there is a long tradition of smuggling illicit goods within Africa, including narcotics, small arms, and humans. The porous border situation facilitates these activities. The well-established smuggling networks and routes in the region may also provide the infrastructure for WMD trafficking. However, it remains unknown if those engaged in other forms of trafficking in the region would or could knowingly or unknowingly collaborate with each other or others to traffic WMD. Context and motivation matter in determining these potentials. It is too simplistic to suggest that "trafficking is trafficking," particularly in Africa, though the role of the monetary incentive to engage in any form of trafficking should not be underestimated.

Governance Issues

It is possible that Africa's under-governed, ungoverned, or non-traditionally governed spaces could provide opportunities for terror groups operating in the region to engage in WMD activities, but the link between these areas and WMD activity should not be overemphasized. As al-Qaeda's experience in the Horn of Africa suggests, it may be more likely that those places which have adequate infrastructure might be leveraged by terrorists as bases for operation. The specific motivation and capacity for a terror group in Africa to engage in such activities cannot be ignored regardless of whether it operates in a "governed" area or not. It should not be assumed that every terror group operating in Africa has the same motivation and capacity to engage in WMD activities or that every location in which they operate provides the same production and proliferation opportunities, even if similarities exist "on paper".

Participation in Internal WMD-related Legal Regimes

Within the traditional WMD analytic community, much has been made of the lack of African participation in international WMD-related legal regimes. At the macro level, African participation in many, if not all, of the regimes is low when compared to other regions of the world. However, simply counting the number of African states party to these regimes is insufficient. It is not appropriate to make direct assumptions about the potential for specific African states to engage in WMD proliferation or turn a blind eye to non-state actors engaging in WMD-related activities within their borders based on this kind of exercise. Further, it is not appropriate to draw conclusions about the level and type of

WMD proliferation threats stemming from Africa and its various sub-regions based on “the numbers”.

With the exception of South Africa, there are considerable philosophical and practical challenges for most African governments to implement those actions necessary to be in compliance with international WMD legal regimes. Philosophical challenges include perceptions of the threat—including, in some cases, whether it exists at all—while practical ones include the capacity/resources to implement actions to improve the security of CBRN materials and/or prevent the proliferation of CBRN materials across borders. However, it should not be assumed that every African state will be met with the same kinds of challenges as it explores participation in these regimes.

The unique context of each state, to include its priorities and security situation, must be understood. This contextual information needs to be factored in when discussing how, and to what extent, particular African states might contribute to international legal efforts to curb WMD proliferation and what assistance they might need to comply with these regimes. Regime participation should not be discouraged (indeed, more participation from African states would be a positive trend), but it should not be assumed that more African participation alone will have a demonstrated impact on reducing WMD threat potential in specific African states, African sub-regions, the African continent, or globally.

“So What?” – General Principles to Remember

- One must avoid over-generalizing about WMD threats in Africa. The role of particular African contexts in shaping the level and type of actual or potential WMD threats and how they perceive them should not be underappreciated. Context matters as do motivation and capacity. All of these factors vary across and within the region and do not remain static.
- WMD issues should be discussed in U.S.-African dialogues, but U.S. officials need to be mindful that their perception of the problem may not mirror the perceptions of the other parties. A nuanced understanding of each party’s viewpoint and circumstance is required. Encouraging every African state to “sign up to” international regimes may not always be as simple as educating them and outlining their importance. Implementation issues matter.
- WMD proliferation is not the same as WMD production or use. Making these distinctions may help policymakers better understand and address the particular WMD concerns in the region.

Small Arms and Light Weapon (SA/LW) Threats

Findings

There are two major types of SA/LW threats in Africa: the influx of SA/LW into the continent and SA/LW demand, possession, and (mis)use. Although some common themes can be gleaned across case studies of specific African states, the way these threats manifest is context-dependent both in terms of time and space. That said, some general conclusions about the nature of these threats transcend state boundaries and should be factored into engagement planning.

SA/LW production is not a major issue in Africa (at least in comparison to others); however, the trafficking of arms into and within the continent is a major source of concern. In particular, there has been a major shift in the post-Cold War era on the nature of this trafficking. More players—both state and non-state actors (including but not limited to organized criminals, pirates, blacksmiths, and possibly terrorists)—are becoming involved in these activities, and many are motivated by the prospect of monetary gain. Due to increased linkages between actors, the networks are becoming more sophisticated and can be used to traffic SA/LW and other illicit goods (e.g., narcotics). This development, and the fact that many non-state actors traffic arms as a side job, makes these activities harder to track. Poor border controls and corruption among border officials in many regions of Africa also increase the ease by which traffickers can conduct these activities. Along the same line, most traffickers are aware that current interdiction efforts, when employed, will—for a variety of reasons—rarely result in prosecution and therefore generally do not fear them.

However, though a major problem, it is important to remember that SA/LW trafficking is not the only dimension of the SA/LW threat in Africa. Indeed, it should not be assumed that stopping arms transfers will alleviate the SA/LW threat in the region. Additionally, one should not assume that focusing on the relationship between SA/LW and the immediate presence of conflict in a particular state is sufficient. At least three other issues must be considered.

First, the root causes of SA/LW demand and possession need to be acknowledged, including a perceived lack of security among many populations in the region due to high levels of crime, weak or illegitimate governance, political tensions, and/or mistrust in military/police providing security. In some regions of Africa, an endemic and long-standing gun culture may contribute to demand or a high level of arms possession, but this potential relationship is a source of debate among experts. Although it should not be assumed that Africa is pre-determinately violent, these underlying factors must be examined.

Secondly, not only do the presence and use of SA/LW multiply the intensity and duration of intrastate conflicts in Africa, but the transfer of SA/LW from conflict zones to peaceful ones may impact the broader security environment. Recent studies suggest that it is often at the end of a conflict when SA/LW may outflow from a conflict zone to a peaceful one. Given this, most African state leaders realize that although they may not be facing a conflict in their particular state, they could face an influx of SA/LW across their state's borders at some point in the future.

Thirdly, SA/LW inventory control issues are prevalent in Africa. Although security risks from unsecured state-owned SA/LW stockpiles in many African states are acknowledged and addressed through U.S. bilateral assistance programs to secure and manage those stockpiles, many national militias and private security companies also have unsecure stockpiles. These entities lack inventory control training in particular, but often training is not afforded to them. Another salient issue is weapons collection and destruction. In many cases, demobilized soldiers in Africa may not be subject to effective weapons collection and reintegration programs, so those arms the soldiers bore during a conflict remain in their possession (along with the skills to use them). Also, once weapons/munitions are

created/enter Africa, they will remain there unless they are trafficked to other regions. Unless destroyed through politically appropriate means, these tools do not become obsolete over time. Nature does not have a major impact on weapons' or munitions' usability.

“So What?” – General Principles to Remember

- Effective engagement strategies to address the SA/LW threat should not be limited to controlling the flow of these weapons, but should also address underlying issues. The most effective strategies address both the supply and demand side of the problem and are based on contextual knowledge of the particular root causes and effects issues at play in that African state. Similar root causes of SA/LW problems may be present in more than one African state, but the effects or manifestation of them may be different. The opposite is also true; that is, the manifestation of the problem may be the same in more than one African state, but the root causes of why the problem is occurring may be different. Context matters.
- Although engagement strategies to address SA/LW problems in Africa should be context-dependent, they should be designed to be both participatory—that is, involve sustained activities by locals in the area, including government and civil society. Local civil society organizations are almost always better-suited for this purpose. The local population may trust them (in some cases, more than government personnel), and they are more likely to have a good understanding of the particular operating environment.
- Though there are many international, national, and sub-regional activities to control SA/LW in Africa, there can be a considerable gap between a particular African government's recognition that SA/LW proliferation and misuse is a problem and a real prioritization by that government to actually address it. This situation might relate to capacity and political will, but those foreign governments hoping to partner with particular African state governments to address SA/LW issues will need to understand what those issues are, are as they will impact the nature of the engagement and prospects for long-term success.

Disease (as a Security Issue)

Findings

In Africa, disease issues are intrinsically linked to both traditional and human security concerns and should be considered among those issues affecting (and affected by) the African security environment. However, when developing strategies to address disease in the region, one should be careful not to assume that every aspect of every disease problem can and should be treated with security-based tools and approaches. It may be important to realize that not every African government will perceive disease as a security concern. This may impact opportunities to collaborate with them to address disease problems on a regional or bilateral basis. Any engagement will not result in instantaneous progress, though buy-in might increase the potential for success.

There are at least five ways high disease rates impact African security. Just as unstable situations can drive high rates of disease in Africa, so too can the aggregate burden of disease

have implications for stability. However, disease is rarely the sole tipping point for state stability in Africa.

- **Conflict:** The relationship between conflict and disease is quite salient. This cause/effect relationship is heavily discussed though not always understood. Conflicts are contextually-based and always changing. The disease and health issues that manifest in one conflict may not be present in another conflict, or at a different time point within a single conflict. Disease problems that present in intra-state conflicts may be different than those that present in inter-state ones in Africa, but further study is required to prove this.
- **Political Stability:** High rates of disease can function as a stressor to already brittle government institutions in many parts of Africa. While it is unlikely that high rates of disease alone can cause a state to become destabilized, the possibility of disease acting as a tipping point should not be ruled out in all African cases. It is also possible that high rates of disease can impede the democratic transition process in some African states. High disease rates would make it more difficult for those charged with this task to develop effective institutions.
- **Military Readiness:** High rates of disease erode military capacity. As militaries interact with civilian populations, personnel can also inadvertently or deliberately act as vectors of transmission of certain diseases, including, but not limited to HIV/AIDS. Not only would this situation negatively impact the health of the population requiring protection, but also, in the case of the disease being deliberately transmitted, it may also affect the course of a conflict or perceptions and attitudes of those affected by the conflict toward the intervening military. Disease affects both African state military forces and other peacekeeping forces engaged in Africa. High rates of disease within these forces impact their capacity and prospects for peace in the regions in which they operate.
- **Economic Security:** Poverty drives disease in Africa, and parasitic diseases, in particular, largely affect the poor. However, some diseases affect all socio-economic classes in Africa, and the broader effects of sickness can be observed at both a micro and macro level.
- **Psycho-Social Stability:** At least two such effects of disease in Africa can be observed: a high rate of fatalist attitudes and behaviors and urbanization.
 - Those affected by disease may give up hope and engage in behavior that could be considered deviant. Some deviant behavior, such as a person with HIV committing sexual crimes, can—in turn—impact disease rates. This deviance may be observed in some African orphan populations (those that lost parents to HIV/AIDS, for example), but also generally.
 - Sickness may drive those working in the agricultural sector to move to the city due to a lack of physical ability to do their jobs in rural areas. Large concentrations of people in cities can also result in higher disease transmission rates (particularly of acute infectious diseases) in a given area. Community/village-based intervention program to lower disease rates may not be as effective in urban settings as in rural areas.

Although the United States Government is actively engaged in addressing disease issues in Africa through health, development, and security-related activities, there are several areas in which it might provide expanded programming which would have a security benefit. These include developing public health infrastructure, developing disease surveillance mechanisms, and conducting locally-based disease prevention or intervention programs.

In particular, more activities are needed to develop public health infrastructure and conduct disease surveillance. These two needs are linked. Public health institutions are crucial to both prevent and respond to disease outbreaks and endemic disease situations. They are also crucial to provide sustained surveillance of outbreaks, including providing data to those charged with response so that these individuals can truly understand the nature, depth, and extent of the situation. Currently, in most regions of Africa, these institutions are not well-developed, if they exist at all.

Even where limited public health infrastructure exists, most of those institutions are not able to provide the disease research and responder community with access to data about the disease rates and outbreaks in their particular locales so that they can properly assess actual or potential disease situations requiring study and action. Where data do exist, the datasets are often incomplete, out of date, or incorrect. In part, these deficiencies may be due to a lack of political will and government capacity to further develop this infrastructure, a lack of international legal requirements to collect and provide data, and/or a lack of infrastructure and expertise within public health institution(s) to collect and manage the data. Thus, addressing these fundamental infrastructure and capacity concerns is imperative to adequately conduct disease surveillance and disease response in the region.

A lack of indigenous expertise on disease (and endemic diseases in particular) remains a problem for adequate disease surveillance and response in many parts of Africa. Many professionals with this expertise have left Africa for other opportunities in the West, creating a brain drain situation. A lack of economic security and provision of resources and infrastructure to support the conduct of health-related research make it easy to leave and offer no incentive to stay. The few academic centers which previously conducted such research (and were a good source of data for responders) have been severely hampered by resource issues. Therefore, even if training is available in epidemiology in Africa, once a person is trained, there is a lack of available institutions at which that individual could continue his/her research within the continent. This has broad implications for developing indigenous capabilities to prevent and respond to disease problems in the region. A lack of “African” on-the-ground expertise in this area can also hinder international response programming and the coordination and sustainment of that programming.

“So What?” – General Principles to Remember

- Though disease is not a tipping point for stability in any African state, it is important to understand how specific disease situations can and do influence the target location’s security and stability when developing any bilateral or regional security-based engagement plan. Focusing on one dimension of stability (for example, military readiness) lessens the chance for overall success in combating the root causes and effects of the epidemic and preventing it from worsening.

- Disease is not always a “security” concern in every African situation nor may African governments and other leaders perceive it as such. Even so, security-based tools, particularly those used with African government buy-in, may be appropriately leveraged in some situations. However, not every aspect of every disease problem in every African situation can or should be treated through security-based engagement. Context matters. What works in one situation may not work in another. On the ground knowledge and expertise is crucial to determine what approach may work best in a given situation.
- A lack of public health infrastructure and disease surveillance capabilities in many areas of Africa remain as fundamental barriers to developing effective near-term and strategic-oriented programming to prevent and/or respond to disease outbreaks. Before engaging in full-fledged specific efforts in a given country, one needs to first determine what infrastructure and capabilities exist within the public health apparatus to collect data, for example, and/or provide general or specific disease expertise. It may very well be that one cannot begin his/her desired program to “address outbreak X” or conduct surveillance for “X” without first assessing, and ideally addressing, these fundamental deficiencies.

Displacement and Militancy

Findings

While there are other security issues associated with displacement besides militarization in Africa, militarization concerns intersect with a variety of other security issues at play in many regions of the continent. These include smuggling, conflict, and weak and poor governance and corruption. Although the militarization of refugees and internally-displaced people (IDP) in Africa has the potential to be linked to terrorist threats and activity in the region, over exaggeration and overemphasis of these linkages should be avoided. However, it is not impossible to imagine a situation in which vulnerable displaced populations could be targeted to support terrorist activity in the region.

In today’s Africa, the militarization of displaced groups manifests differently than it did in the recent past. The 1994 Rwanda case serves as a major historical example of refugee/IDP militarization in Africa, but not all of today’s displaced groups on the continent are as politically and militarily organized as the Hutus were in 1994.¹⁰ The lack of political and military organization among most displaced groups in Africa has a huge impact on the degree to which armed groups can successfully target them and use them to advance their cause.

Despite this shift, other factors, such as there being a higher number of IDPs in Africa today than in the past, suggest that it is important to consider militarization as a current and future threat to African security. For example, IDPs are usually not located in centralized camps in Africa. They are likely not afforded the same level of protection and needs provision as refugees. This may make them more vulnerable, or at least vulnerable in a different way—for externally-based exploitation.

¹⁰ Some groups in the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be considered minor exceptions to this rule.

This is not to suggest, however, that those displaced populations in camps or other protection sites are not vulnerable to exploitation by armed actors. Though the creation and sustainment of such sites is necessary to provide for some displaced groups' security in many African regions, humanitarian intervention may have unintended consequences. These sites can be attractive venues for armed actors to manipulate and even militarize the vulnerable populations concentrated within them. The protected nature of these sites, the material and human resources available within them, and the political prominence of their displaced communities can be leveraged to serve the ends of armed groups. One African example of this phenomenon can be found in the Dadaab camp in Kenya. Good police and military surveillance of these sites is one way to hinder their access to and exploitation by armed groups.

Nonetheless, it is imprudent to suggest that every displaced population or segment of it in Africa has the same potential to become militarized. Even more fundamentally, although displacement is common in Africa— primarily due to the high prevalence of conflict—it is important to remember that no two refugee or IDP populations at any given time in any location in Africa are completely alike. In addition to understanding the particular context for the displacement and the security situation at hand, one needs to examine the displaced population that is vulnerable to militarization as well as the targeting armed group to determine if militarization may occur, the form it will take, and the context under which threats and vulnerabilities might emerge.

Several factors may require attention to determine this potential for militarization in any context:

- Vulnerable population: One must know if the population is comprised of refugees or IDPs; the reason for displacement (it's not always conflict); the location, length of displacement, and access to the "outside world;" age/gender status; economic status; and ethnic, religious, ideological, and political affinities. However, no single factor can determine whether or not a population or sub-section of it will become militarized, though patterns may be observable.
- Targeting armed group: The particular threat that any armed group may pose to vulnerable displaced populations may vary depending on the composition of the group and their *raison d'être*. For example, it may matter if the group is terrorist-, insurgent-, or militant-based. Additionally, understanding the group's motivation is important. In some cases, a group may not have one single motivation to exploit refugees or IDPs to advance its cause, but many. These motivations can influence "how" the group targets the displaced population.

"So What?" – General Principles to Remember

- Although militarization is not a problem in every refugee and IDP population in Africa, it is likely to remain a potential threat. The conditions under which militarization will occur cannot always be predicted, but a good understanding of the dynamics at play in any given displaced population and its corresponding security situation can provide a good indicator of the potential for that population to engage in radical behavior and/or illicit activity on behalf of armed groups.

- Reviewing how displaced people became militarized in Africa throughout its history may provide important clues to prevent and respond to current and emerging militant situations in the region, but one needs to recognize the diversity among these displaced populations and the role that their unique situations played in determining both whether and how they became militarized.
- More policing and military surveillance of refugee and IDP protection sites in Africa would help limit the potential for armed actors to infiltrate these sites, but it should be recognized that not every displaced group is located within a protection site.
- Improving police and military surveillance of a particular protection site may require additional security sector reform, particularly if the surveillance onus is to be placed on an African police and/or military force. Those security forces would require more capacity and resources to effectively carry out that duty in many cases. The long-term development of good security institutions is fundamental.
- Humanitarian intervention is necessary to ensure the safety, security, and protection of displaced groups in Africa even though such actions may be exploited by armed actors. To help prevent these unintended consequences, every actor, whether officially a member of the “humanitarian community” or not, needs to follow strict guidelines to inform its engagement practices.

Food Security and Conflict

Findings

Natural and man-made food security crises in Africa have a broad impact on the African security environment today and quite likely over the long-term. While they are not a new phenomena in Africa, the way they manifest on the continent today may be different than in the past due to the evolving and multi-faceted nature of the African security environment. African food insecurity cannot be studied in a vacuum. Food insecurity can intersect with other current and emerging security challenges in the region, including conflict, natural disasters and climate change, disease, poor governance, urbanization, displacement, demographic shifts, radicalization and political violence, economic instability, illicit trafficking, land issues, and human rights issues. However, not all of the challenges listed above are present in every African security situation that could potentially result from or lead to food insecurity. For example, a natural disaster may emerge in an area that is already dealing with political and/or economic instability (or even conflict) or famine. This occurrence may worsen a pre-existing difficult security situation, and both factors may negatively impact the food security situation in the area.

Perhaps the most widely studied food insecurity situations in Africa are those in which conflict gives rise to food insecurity (the most understood situation), food insecurity gives rise to conflict, or root causes give way to both food insecurity and conflict (the least understood). Conflict can give rise to food insecurity in Africa when actors manipulate access to and use of food or food-related resources for their own political, economic, or strategic gain (by taking control of cash crops, for example, as was the case in Chad and Cote d'Ivoire in the late 1990s). This can also occur when the levels of violence impact agricultural productivity or when the violence impedes a vulnerable population's access to food. Food insecurity can also give rise to or exacerbate conflict in Africa when a certain

population harbors resentment over its access to and the availability of food and related resources (such as land or fishing rights). An example of this is the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in October 2009. It is also possible for conflict (or low-levels of violence) to emerge when food aid or other food-related assistance decisions exacerbate existing tensions and divisions in a given area. Examples of this situation can be found in the cases of Malawi and Zimbabwe in 2002-2003.

Just as food insecurity is not a necessary condition for conflict to emerge in Africa, neither is conflict necessary for the emergence of a food insecurity situation. The hungriest populations in the region may not always be the most violent, and famine can occur with or without conflict conditions. Therefore, security-focused engagement to address either of these two situations (food insecurity and conflict) should not be predicated on an assumption that there exists a co-dependent relationship between the two variables.

The possibility of food being used as a weapon or a foreign or domestic policy tool also will likely continue to exist in Africa. This situation is more common amongst African actors than international ones, though the theft of food from aid convoys should not always be assumed to be an exercise of food power. International actors might also use food power in Africa to cause changes in the political behavior of another state government. Though there are limited examples of this phenomenon occurring in the region, there are no examples of the international actors being *successful* in achieving their strategic/political objectives simply by using food power. Nonetheless, any attempt can be damaging and dangerous to vulnerable populations in the region.

“So What?” – General Principles to Remember

- Food insecurity issues may be at play or at least have the potential to emerge in any African security situation, though it should never be assumed that food security situations will cause or result from a particular security situation. Decisions to engage (and how) in these situations need to account for this fact. Context matters and that context can change.
- Conflict and food insecurity don’t always go hand and hand, but in many African contexts, approaches to address the conflict, the underlying causes, and its effects may be unsuccessful if food issues do not receive any attention.

Security Sector Reform and Non/Less-than-Lethal Force Issues

(Note: The project team understands that security sector reform (SSR) does not pose a security challenge for the African continent. Instead, reforms in this area, like governance,¹¹ are fundamental to addressing many of the security challenges that plague the region. The research team sought to consider how security sector reform could be used to improve African security, and to explore this subject, the team commissioned a think piece on the topic. Along a similar line of thought, decisions need to be made on how to deal with African security issues. Many questions can be asked. For example, should force always be employed? If so, what kind of force? Can non/ less-than-lethal force be considered an option to address some African security challenges? The research team’s working group discussion session on “non/ less-than-lethal force issues”

¹¹ Governance was acknowledged to be a major issue impacting African stability. However, for many reasons, it was not a primary focus of this project. It is acknowledged, however, that additional research is needed in this area as it is a major issue stability of many, if not all, African states.

addressed some of these questions. Overall, due to the nature of this topic, the “findings” from the research differ considerably from those associated with specific African security challenges.)

Findings

SSR is a valuable and necessary component to post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building efforts, and it is a steady focus of international programming in Africa. It should not be assumed, however, that all African partners in every situation are enthused about the prospect of working with government and non-government partners to develop and implement SSR. Every effort should be made to ensure African ownership of the programming while still ensuring that activities are both initiated and sustained.

Although this general principle and possible tension applies in a variety of—if not all—African contexts, all programming needs to be tailored to the specific needs and capabilities of the African state for which it is being implemented. There are several good examples of how security sector reform can work in Africa, but one should be careful about tailoring lessons-learned across particular situations.

People are a central part of these SSR activities, and this can create both opportunities and challenges. SSR needs to take place within the broader context of political reform and transition in order to have the potential to be long-lasting and effective. To this end, partnership is required in every situation in which SSR activities are implemented, and in many cases, this is an area needing improvement in Africa.

Although there is little debate on the role of SSR in addressing and improving stability in many regions of Africa, there is some debate on how to reform African military and police forces, including how they use force. One question that emerges is whether non/less-than-lethal force options should be considered as means to address African security problems and the degree to which those kinds of force options are conducive to addressing those problems. Indeed, decisions on whether to employ non/less-than-lethal force approaches in peacekeeping, SA/LW threat reduction, and security sector reform in Africa, for example, should be undertaken as part of a larger contextually-based examination of the particular security situation at hand and the availability and appropriateness of tools available to address it.

The question of whether non/less-than-lethal means can be used to address a security situation is dependent on the context being discussed. No two African contexts are exactly the same. While non/less-than-lethal force options may be useful in improving the security situation in those areas which are not impacted by major violent conflict (Sierra Leone, for example), such options may not be appropriate responses to other situations where violence is at a high level (e.g., the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The particulars of each security situation, including the nature of the problem, the nature of security forces engaging in the situation (private security firms, police, military, or paramilitary), and the cultural/political influences on that situation need to be well-understood.

Discussions of how to use non/less-than-lethal force options to address security problems should take place in the broader context of determining the best approaches to implement

African military and police reform. However, it should not be assumed that introducing non/less-than-lethal force options into an African military or police force's toolkit will change how they interact with other each other, how they perceive security situations, or their overall patterns of behavior. Lessons from places like Sierra Leone on how to effectively engage on security problems and transform security forces might be applied to other African contexts, but some of the "successes" in Sierra Leone may be simply the result of its particular situation.

Although implementing community policing (CP) may be an approach to consider when reforming and developing African police forces, it should not be assumed that CP will be beneficial in addressing all African security problems or be appropriate in every context. However, CP could possibly help police forces work with communities to identify security problems and focus more holistically on problems vice incidents. If such tactics are successful, force will not need to be employed. If they are not completely successful, non/less-than-lethal force options may be considered with lethal back-up. The effective development of a community policing approach in any African context will require training, resources, and a sustained commitment as well as an appreciation for context.

Several principles should be followed when identifying and implementing external engagement strategies to help African military and police reform and/or consider non/less-than-lethal force options to address their own security problems. Any engagement needs to be long-term, sustained, and consistent, and expectations need to be managed. Engagement may involve training military and police officials, but such training needs to be tailored to the particular situation at hand, the needs of those receiving the training, and, if involving discussions of non/less-than-lethal weapons, the availability of those weapons to those forces. The introduction of advanced non/less-than-lethal weapons may not only be inappropriate in certain African contexts at a practical level, it may also be an incendiary issue.

"So What?" – General Principles to Remember

- Don't assume every African partner is enthused about the prospect of working with government and non-government partners to develop and implement security sector reform. That said, African ownership of the reform process is crucial since it is a "people-centric" activity. To that end, all reform options need to be tailored to the particular needs of that state and its capabilities. Though it can be difficult to initiate reform in some cases, it can be even more difficult to ensure that reform is sustained.
- Using the terms "non-lethal" or "less-than-lethal" weapons or force may cause confusion and misperceptions in some regions of Africa. These weapons aren't always advanced. Context matters and needs to be understood before training and other programming occurs.
- Encouraging all African military and police personnel to use "non/less-than-lethal force" to address every security problem in every region at every point in time is not appropriate. There is no "one size fits all" approach to incorporating this force option into the tool kit for Africans to address their own security problems.

SECTION 4: ADDITIONAL PROJECT RESOURCES

This project summary report encapsulates the findings of the following unclassified, publically-released reports:

Jennifer Perry (editor). *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon; Voices from the NGO Community* (A Compendium of Think Pieces), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2010-030, November 2010 (forthcoming).

Jennifer Perry and Jennifer Borchard. *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon; Improving African Security Through the Use of Non/Less-than-Lethal Force: Challenges, Issues and Approaches* (Working Group Discussion Report), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2010-010, May 2010.

Jennifer Perry and Jennifer Borchard. *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon; Food Security and Conflict: Current and Future Security Dimensions of the Challenge in Africa* (Working Group Discussion Report), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2010-009, April 2010.

Jennifer Perry and Jennifer Borchard. *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon; Refugees, Internally-Displaced Persons, and Militancy in Africa: Current and/or Future Threat?* (Working Group Discussion Report), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2010-002, January 2010.

Jennifer Perry and Jennifer Borchard. *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon; Current and Future Security Dimensions of Disease in Africa* (Working Group Discussion Report), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2009-010, August 2009.

Jennifer Perry and Jennifer Borchard. *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon; Small Arms and Light Weapons: Current and/or Future Threat?* (Working Group Discussion Report), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2009-005, May 2009.

Jennifer Perry and Jennifer Borchard. *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon; Weapons of Mass Destruction: Current and/or Future Threat?* (Working Group Discussion Report), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2009-004, April 2009.

Jennifer Perry, and Jennifer Borchard, Jessica Piombo. *African Security Challenges: Now and Over the Horizon* (Workshop Report), Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, 2009-001, January 2009.

